

LIST OF CURRENT CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method for manufacturing brushes, comprising steps of:  
  
    placing a bundle of fibers loosely held in a holder, the fibers having far ends protruded from said holder and subjected to an end grinding process, and free ends opposite said far ends resting loosely on the surface of an underlying support; and  
  
    bringing said far ends of said fibers into contact with a processing equipment while said fibers are loosely held in said holder; and  
  
    removing said far ends of said fibers from contact with said processing equipment when said process is complete;  
  
    wherein a length of said far ends between said holder and said processing equipment is varied during said end grinding process.
2. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the fibers are initially put into contact with the processing equipment with a smaller freedom of movement at the far ends, and that the freedom of movement at the far ends is enlarged afterwards.
3. (Cancelled)
4. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the fibers are placed in an opening in the holder.
5. (Cancelled)
6. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the distance between the processing equipment and a side of the holder from where the fibers protrude

is enlarged, while the contact between the free ends of the fibers and the processing equipment is being maintained.

7. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the fibers are initially presented with a length of said far ends which is on average smaller than 1 millimeter.

8. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 2, wherein the processing equipment is initially situated at a first distance from the side of the holder from which the fibers protrude, and in a subsequent step said distance is increased.

9. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 8, wherein the first distance is smaller than 1 millimeter.

10. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the processing equipment will first be positioned up to a certain distance from the side of the holder out of which the fibers protrude, and the fibers are subsequently brought into contact with the processing equipment with their far ends.

11. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein, apart from the aforesaid holder and the processing equipment, use is also made of a number of push-out elements, and the variation in the length of the far ends from the holder is obtained by moving one or several of the holder, the processing equipment, and the push-out elements.

12. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein it is used for rounding off the far ends of the fibers.

13. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein use is made of a grinding tool as a processing equipment.

14. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein it is used for manufacturing tooth brushes.

15. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein it is applied in combination with the use of at least one holder which is provided with at least one opening in which the fibers have been provided by pushing them in in the longitudinal direction.

16. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein it is used in a manufacturing process whereby bundles of fibers are placed in a holder as a function of a fiber bundle pattern of a brush or of a brush part to be manufactured, after which the thus obtained package of bundles of fibers placed in the holder is further processed in order to fix this package of bundles of fibers in a brush body, whereby the above-mentioned processing is then carried out while the bundles are situated in the above-mentioned holder.

17. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the method of claim 1 is used in a manufacturing process wherein bundles of fibers are separated from a fiber stock by means of a holder and temporarily remain in said holder to be further processed subsequently, in particular to be further processed in the manufacturing process of the brushes, wherein the above-mentioned processing then takes place while the bundles are situated in the above-mentioned holder.

18. (Original) The method according to claim 17, wherein a rotating bundle remover is used as a holder which is provided with one or several take-up openings along its perimeter, and which moves at least along a fiber cartridge, in which the aforesaid fiber stock is present.

19. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 18, wherein the take-up openings, when aligned with said fiber cartridge, are only partly filled by fibers from said fiber cartridge.

20. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 17, wherein the processed bundles of fibers from the holder are placed in a cartridge again.

21. (Withdrawn) A device for manufacturing brushes according to the method of claim 1, wherein it comprises a device for processing the far ends of fibers and in that the latter device at least comprises a holder in which fibers can be held loosely together, as well as a processing equipment which can work in conjunction with the free ends of the above-mentioned fibers while they are provided in the above-mentioned holder.

22. (Withdrawn) The device according to claim 21, wherein it also comprises push-out elements to bring the fibers further out of the holder with their free ends; in that it comprises a drive for moving one or several of the above-mentioned elements, in other words the holder and/or the processing equipment and/or the push-out elements; and in that it also comprises a control with which said movement takes place in such a manner that a method is carried out according to claim 5.

23. (Withdrawn) The device according to claim 21, wherein the way whereby bundles of fibers are placed in a holder is a function of a fiber bundle pattern of a brush or

of a brush part to be manufactured, after which the thus obtained package of bundles placed in the holder is further processed in order to fix this package of bundles of fibers in a brush body, wherein the above-mentioned device for processing the far ends of the fibers works in conjunction with the fibers present in the above-mentioned holder.

24. (Withdrawn) The device according to claim 21, wherein it is of the type whereby bundles of fibers are separated from a fiber stock by means of a holder and temporarily remain in said holder to be further processed subsequently, in particular to be further processed in the manufacturing process of the brushes, wherein the above-mentioned device for processing the far ends of the fibers works in conjunction with the fibers present in the above-mentioned holder.

25. (Withdrawn) The device according to claim 21, wherein the processing equipment is a grinding tool or the like for rounding off fiber ends.